

LORD OF GLORY

JESUS: GLORIOUS AT HIS BIRTH

Luke 2:1-7

INTRODUCTION: Christmas is filled with mystery, miracles, and merriment. Christmas is about the entrance of Jesus into the world. Jesus took on a human body by the means of the virgin birth. The angels sang "Glory to God" at Christ's birth. The Bible says the shepherds returned to their sheep "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." We should be giving glory to Christ for His glorious birth.

I. MARY CHOSEN

A. MARY'S VIRTUES.

The Bible teaches that Mary was just an ordinary young girl who was chosen by God for His divine purpose. Mary was a believer in God and lived a godly life. She probably was a teenager at the time the angel spoke to her. Mary was betrothed to Joseph. As a young righteous girl, Mary was "highly favored" with God. (Luke 1:28) The phrase highly favored means in Greek "much grace." Mary received much grace from God in being chosen as the mother of the Son of God. Even Gabriel said to Mary, "blessed art thou among women."

While Mary was a young woman of great virtues, she was a sinner and in need of salvation. Mary needed to be saved by God's grace just like all of us. (Luke 1:46) Mary's Son would be her Savior too!

B. MARY'S VIRGINITY.

Mary's virginity allowed her to be chosen as the mother of the Savior. A miracle was performed by a virgin giving birth to a son. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus' mother was a virgin. Isaiah made this prediction in Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This prophecy was fulfilled when God chose Mary. The gospels of Matthew and Luke both speak of Mary as a virgin.

Mary was sexually pure and devoted to her Lord as a teenager. She knew God's Word and was prepared to do His will. Jesus Christ was the greatest gift the world could possibly receive. He is the greatest blessing to every individual who accepts Him as Savior.

II. MIRACLE CONCEPTION

A. INCARNATION AT CONCEPTION

The conception of Jesus Christ was a miracle. The word incarnation means "the act of being made flesh." The biblical teaching of the Incarnation means that two distinct natures (divine and human) are united in one Person. We are unable to comprehend the conception and incarnation of Jesus. It is a miracle and a mystery to finite man. We accept it by faith because we believe that nothing is impossible with God. This was a divine act of the Holy Spirit.

How could a holy God become a man and live on earth? The birth of Jesus Christ was the incarnation of God Himself for Jesus is God. This was accomplished by the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ. The angel Gabriel's announcement to the virgin Mary caused her to ask, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34) Gabriel's answer was: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

The virgin Mary's conception and her giving birth to Jesus did not mark the beginning of the Son of God. Jesus was the personification of the written and spoken Word. John made it clear in John 1:1 that

the Word was eternal, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word is none other than Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In John 1:14, it is explained: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." In Revelation 19:13, Jesus is named "The Word of God."

John gave this warning to all who would deny the fact that Jesus came to earth in human flesh. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." (2 John 1:7) Anyone who rejects the truth that Jesus came in the flesh "is not of God." (1 John 4:1-3)

B. IMPORTANCE OF CONCEPTION.

Why is the miracle of the virgin birth so important? There are many reasons for the virgin birth. Here are a few of those reasons: The conception clearly speaks to the uniqueness of Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus is the second person in the Holy Trinity. He always existed with the Heavenly Father and Holy Spirit. The Incarnation means that the eternal Word or second person of the Trinity assumed human flesh. He became a man without ceasing to be God.

Jesus' divine birth was prophesied in Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." His characteristics are described as both human and divine. Jesus is fully God and fully man, and the fact of His incarnation is of utmost importance.

The virgin birth is foundational in everything the Bible teaches concerning Jesus. It was Jesus who said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39)

The Bible claims that no man has seen God. (1 John 4:12) The virgin birth of Jesus changed that. In John 1:18, it is stated: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Jesus said in John 14:9, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The virgin birth and incarnation of Jesus Christ made it possible for Jesus to identify with the human race. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb 2:18) "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb 4:15) Jesus was willing to descend into our world and in doing so He felt our pain, knew our sorrows and died for our sins. He came to reconcile us to God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

The virgin birth made it possible for Jesus to die on a cross, and be raised from the dead. Jesus' death and resurrection assure us that we have a Savior. The significance of the virgin birth is a profound truth. It will take us all eternity to begin to appreciate its truth.

III. MARVELOUS CHILD

A. MARVELOUS SON.

Jesus was marvelous in the eyes of His Heavenly Father. We can only imagine the Father's pleasure in looking down from heaven at His Son lying in the manger. He knew His Son was in human flesh for the purpose of accomplishing His will. The Father spoke of Jesus as His "Beloved Son." (Luke 3:22)

Every Jewish girl prayed to be the mother of the Messiah. Mary loved God and wanted to serve him with all of her heart. Jesus was marvelous in the eyes of His earthly mother. Mary's heart must have been filled with love, joy, and wonder as she looked down into the face of the baby Jesus. She must

have reflected on all the words of the angel who said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest."

B. MARVELOUS SAVIOR.

The angel of the Lord appeared to some shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night. He made the following announcements to the shepherds saying: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Luke 2:11-12) The Lord of all creation humbled Himself and came to this earth to be born in a stable, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. His name was given before His birth. The angel told Joseph in a dream that Mary would bring forth a son, and "shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins."

C. MARVELOUS SOVEREIGNTY.

The Old Testament and New Testament declare Jesus as Lord. Jesus was the marvelous sovereignty in the eyes of the angelic host. That night at the stable a multitude of the heavenly host looked down upon the baby Jesus and broke forth in praise to God saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The angel had told Joseph and Mary of His greatness. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:" (Luke 1:32)

Isaiah prophesied saying: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." (Isa 9:7) The wise men made their journey from the east bringing their gifts for the King. When they found Him they bowed and worshipped Him.

Jesus was the Son of God and the Sovereign Lord at His birth. The Old Testament and New Testament declare Jesus as Lord. "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (Rom 14:11)

LESSONS FOR LIFE:

1. The birth of Jesus was glorious. The gift of Himself to us is even more glorious.
2. The glory and person of Jesus cannot be put in a box under a Christmas tree.
3. The glorious Jesus and the gift of salvation can be received into a person's life if he/she will receive Him. (John 1:12, Romans 6:23; 10:13; Ephesians 2:7-8)